



NEWS RELEASE

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WHITNEY COMPANIES NAMED MAINE JEFFREY H. BUTLAND SBA FAMILY-OWNED BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

Augusta, ME – Whitney’s Blueberries, Whitney Wreath, Whitney’s Tool Shed and it’s President, David M. Whitney, have been named the U.S. Small Business Administration’s (SBA) Jeffrey H. Butland Family-Owned Small Business of Maine for 2007. Combining several businesses in Washington County, Whitney works tirelessly to develop and expand his business, provide employment opportunities and be active in the community.

“This award has special meaning for Maine and for New England,” said SBA New England Regional Administrator Charles Summers. “Jeff Butland, during his tenure as New England Regional Administrator, was the champion for family-owned businesses. His leadership and dedication to family-owned business convinced the SBA Administrator to honor this vital segment of our economy. After his death in 2004, the SBA named this national award in his honor.”

Whitney’s has been an active part of the Washington County business community for 4 generations. David’s great-grandfather Charles Whitney was a blueberry farmer in Jonesboro. David’s great-grandfather Carol Fisher ran the first Dodge agency in Washington County and was a fir trader in Pembroke. David’s grandparents Millard and Dorothy later joined by their son Dale ran a successful Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep dealership in Machias and started the current blueberry farm base which totals 400 acres today. David and Dale Whitney have a strong partnership with Wyman’s blueberries growing and buying for Wymans in excess of 1 million pounds of wild blueberries per year. David sits on the Wild Blueberry Research Advisory Committee and is an active member of the marketing committee of Wild Blueberry Association of North America (WABANA). The company works to ensure this vital part of our state’s natural resources together with added value products from those resources maintain a bright future for Washington County businesses.

Wild blueberries, according to recent studies, have emerged as the leader in antioxidant punch – in fact they have the highest antioxidant capacity per serving, compared with more than twenty other fruits. Antioxidants fight aging, cancer and heart disease. This study by the USDA has had a positive effect on Maine wild blueberry sales.

In 1988 Whitney started Whitney Wreath, now UPS' largest seasonal shipper of Christmas wreaths in Maine. Each day Whitney ships eight to twelve trailer loads of wreaths and other balsam fir products which are shipped direct to the consumer through out the country during it's 4 week shipping season. Whitney's has 4 plants in Maine, which add value to the traditional Christmas wreath.

In 1999 Whitney started the third company, Whitney's Tool Shed, a year-round equipment and party rental business. The company has significant brand identity in eastern and northern Maine, due in part to the highly creative television and radio advertisements starring Whitney's singing and acting talents.

Whitney employs twelve full-time and 800 seasonal workers. His vision of success is that his businesses continue to benefit his family, his employees, and the communities of Down East Maine.

“This is the type of business that Jeff Butland wanted this award to spotlight” said Mary McAleney, Maine SBA District Director. “There was nothing he enjoyed more than traveling the highways and byways, meeting entrepreneurs and learning the secrets of their success. Jeff would have enjoyed meeting David Whitney.”

Edward Hennessey, Jr., President of Machias Savings Bank, described Whitney as, “a true entrepreneur, persistent, dedicated, enthusiastic and a hard worker.” He added, “I cannot think of anybody more deserving of the Jeffrey H. Butland SBA Family-Owned Small Business Award.”

Whitney will be honored at the SBA awards celebration in May.